



# MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **\$66 MILLION DOLLARS IN FOOD STAMP BENEFITS ISSUED TO TENNESSEE FAMILIES IN JANUARY** *CASELOAD CONTINUES TO CLIMB*

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — More than 347,000 Tennessee families received needed help putting food on the table in January through the Food Stamp program. The number of households receiving assistance rose 12 percent from January 2003 to January 2004. The current number of individuals in those households totals nearly 796,000.

Food Stamp program benefits are 100 percent federally funded through the United States Department of Agriculture. The program is administered by Human Services and provides nutritional assistance benefits to children and families, the elderly, the disabled, unemployed and working families.

The rise in Food Stamp program participation can be attributed to seasonal factors and continued weak job growth. Outreach and education efforts on the part of the Department of Human Services and its partners have made many potentially eligible people aware of the program, as well.

More than \$60 million in food stamp benefits are issued in Tennessee each month. Last month nearly \$66 million in food stamp benefits were issued, compared with \$58 million in January 2003. For the last state fiscal year, the average household size was 2.3 persons, and the average household monthly benefit was \$172.

For more information on the Food Stamp program and to view a county by county breakdown of Food Stamp participation and issuance, visit the Department of Human Services website at:  
<http://www.state.tn.us/humanserv/fs-participation.htm>

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